# Gas Development

The Jicarilla Ranger District is almost entirely leased for gas development, and there are roughly 200 existing natural gas wells in the JWHT. Associated pipelines, compressor stations, injection wells, and an estimated 70 miles of roads built primarily for the purpose of drilling also exist for the extraction of natural gas within the territory. New construction and drilling operations are allowed between April 1st and October 31st annually. There are an estimated 800-1000 acres of land incorporated in well pads and roads in the JWHT.

## Comparison of Alternatives

### Past, Present, and Reasonably Foreseeable Activities

The past, present and reasonably foreseeable activities that will be used to analyze the cumulative effects on gas development are: Livestock and wild horse grazing and activities associated with natural gas development (roads, pipelines and well pads). Anticipated gas development over the next 18-20 years on the JWHT is forecast to be approximately 300 new wells with roughly 3 acres of disturbance for each well (900 acres) and an additional 500 acres in new roads for a total of 1400 acres of surface disturbance. If revegetation is possible, 2 out of 3 acres associated with new well locations will be reclaimed.

### Alternative A

Heavy grazing use associated with high populations of horses would severely limit the ability of oil and gas producers to revegetate and control noxious weeds on well locations, pipeline right of ways, abandoned wells, and closed roads. When disturbed areas are not properly revegetated they are highly susceptible to noxious weed invasion. Producers are required to revegetate disturbed areas and control noxious weeds. There would be no other affects to the gas industry. The potential impacts would be high, with very limited success in revegetation efforts, increased invasion of noxious weeds, and increased dollars spent on attempted revegetation by gas producers.

### Alternatives B, and C

These alternatives would improve revegetation and noxious weed control efforts by the gas industry, thus improving the effectiveness of mitigation measures applied to minimize surface disturbance.

### Alternatives D

These alternatives would improve revegetation and noxious weed control efforts by the gas industry during years when moisture is favorable, thus improving the effectiveness of mitigation measures applied to minimize surface disturbance. During drought years, heavier grazing use could impact revegetation efforts thus decreasing the effectiveness of mitigation measures applied to minimize surface disturbance.

#### Cumulative Effects

Effects described above include the cumulative effects of livestock with the impacts of horses on gas development.